

**California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Los Angeles Region**

**Executive Officer's Report
Dennis A. Dickerson, Executive Officer**

March 2, 2000

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GROUNDWATER DIVISION

Board Members Appointed by Governor

In December, the Governor appointed two new Board Members to serve on the Regional Board.

Robert L. Miller, of Hidden Hills, was appointed to serve in the category of Recreation, Fish, & Wildlife. Mr. Miller was a partner with the investment bank, Building and Construction Capital, from 1994 to 1998. From 1980 to 1991, he worked for West Venture Development Company. He is a licensed general contractor, a member of the Stanford Institute of Qualitative Social Sciences, and a member of Ducks Unlimited, an animal preservation group.

Timothy J. Shaheen, of Northridge, was appointed to serve in the category of Irrigated Agriculture. He has served as the Chief Executive Officer for Sun World International, Inc. since 1996. From 1989 to 1996, he was senior vice-president of Albert Fisher, one of the country's largest processors and distributors of fresh produce. From 1982 to 1989, Mr. Shahee served as a senior manager at Ernst & Young, a public accounting firm. He is a member of the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Association and the Produce Advisory Board. Mr. Shaheen earned a bachelor degree from the University of Southern California and a master of business administration degree from the California State University, Northridge.

Board Member Elections

H. David Nahai and Marilyn Lyons were re-elected Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, respectively, at the January 26, 2000 Board Meeting.

ENFORCEMENT & REMEDIATION

Administrative Civil Liability Complaint against the City of Los Angeles

On February 15, 2000, the Executive Officer issued an administrative civil liability in the amount of \$125,397, to the City of Los Angeles for discharge from the Los Angeles-Glendale Water

Reclamation Plant, in violation of Board Orders Nos. 98-047 and 97-042. At least 1,400,000 gallons of secondary effluent were discharged to the reclaimed water distribution system and distributed to customers. The Plant is also subject to a Time Schedule Order (Order No. 98-071), requiring the City to comply with interim effluent limits and implement actions to achieve full compliance with waste discharge requirements.

Administrative Civil Liability Complaint against Ferguson Construction Company

Carlos Urrunaga, Regional Board staff member, encountered an illegal discharge at the Costco construction site in Culver City on April 12, 1999. The site operators were observed discharging mud and sediments to Washington Boulevard near Lincoln Boulevard. The discharged materials ultimately flowed to a duck pond in Marina Del Rey. A Notice of Violation was issued on April 28, 1999. On February 14, 2000, the Executive Officer issued Administrative Civil Liability Complaint No. 2000-015 to Ferguson Construction Company of Seattle, Washington. Ferguson Construction Company is a contractor to Costco Wholesale Company.

Cleanup Projects

Baldwin Park Cleanup Orders

Contaminants remaining in soil in the Baldwin Park area are a source of on-going contamination to underlying groundwater. Regional Board staff is working closely with the USEPA to ensure that soil cleanup efforts are coordinated with the USEPA's regional groundwater cleanup effort. Since November 1999, the Executive Officer has issued 11 Cleanup and Abatement Orders (CAOs) to clean up soil in the Baldwin Park Operable Unit of the San Gabriel Basin. However, almost all of the dischargers have petitioned the State Board for review of the Regional Board's action. Before the State Board considers these petitions, the Regional Board is scheduled to consider the CAOs and petitions during the public meeting on March 2, 2000.

February 1, 2000 was the first deadline for compliance with the CAOs. All dischargers missed this deadline and may face enforcement action from the Regional Board.

In addition to assessment/cleanup of soil contamination and coordination of groundwater monitoring, the Orders contain a provision for offsetting impairments to drinking water wells. In the event that water suppliers and their customers end up bearing a significant portion of the groundwater cleanup costs, the Regional Board will consider requiring dischargers to prepare and implement a plan to assist purveyors to offset impairments and ensure an adequate, safe, and dependable supply of drinking water to San Gabriel residents. To date, two petitions have been received. However, Regional Board staff has had to defer work on the purveyors' petitions in order to work on issues arising from the dischargers' petitions of the CAOs.

Landfills

Sunshine Canyon Landfill

On January 28, 2000, Dennis Dasker and Rod Nelson, Regional Board staff, participated in a Joint Legislative Audit Meeting, held at the Van Gogh Elementary School (Granada Hills), regarding the proposed expansion of the Sunshine Canyon Landfill. The meeting was chaired by Assemblyman Scott Wildman, with Speaker of the Assembly Antonio Villaraigosa, other legislators, and members of the public in attendance.

Assemblyman Wildman's objective for the meeting was to clarify which regulatory agencies had authority concerning the proposed expansion of the Sunshine Canyon Landfill into the City of Los Angeles, and to facilitate public input. Regional Board staff informed the legislators and public of our permitting role, including siting, design, operation, and closure criteria, and responded to questions. Following the end of the discussion, Assemblyman Wildman requested members of the public who

are concerned about the proposed expansion to submit their concerns to his office, and he will forward them to the appropriate agency.

Enforcement

LA County DHS Well Construction/Destruction Protocol

Regional Board staff were asked, by the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services staff, to meet with Supervisor Antonovich's staff, a number of well drillers, and the City of Los Angeles DWP on December 15, 1999 and February 8, 2000. The meetings were in response to LA County's concerns regarding the adequacy of driller's practices in constructing and decommissioning wells, and their impact on water quality. Board staff is currently working with the County and the well drillers to conceive and implement more comprehensive and effective methods for well construction and abandonment that will better safeguard the groundwater. There will be a third meeting of this group in March 2000.

Taylor Ranch, Ventura

Following up on a referral, Regional Board staff inspected a discharge of oily wastes from an oilfield waste sump on Taylor Ranch (Ventura) in October 1999 and issued Cleanup and Abatement Order No. 99-120 to the Wood-Claeysens Foundation. AERA Energy, LLC repaired the sump on a temporary basis. However, inspection by Regional Board staff in January 2000 indicated a continuing threat of waste discharge, in violation of the Basin Plan. On February 9, 2000, the Executive Officer amended this Cleanup and Abatement Order by naming CalTrans as an additional discharger. The CAO requires the dischargers to submit a Report of Waste Discharge.

Halaco Engineering, Inc.

Halaco Engineering Inc., a metal recycling facility located along the Ventura County coastline, discharges wastewater under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) issued in 1980. Discharge from the facility flows into a large bermed, unlined pond located adjacent to the beach and surrounded on three sides by wetlands.

Regional Board staff conducted an investigation in August 1999, and determined that the unlined ponds were discharging leachate into the surrounding wetlands. Regional Board staff then issued a notice of violation (NOV) to Halaco on February 14, 2000, citing six violations of Halaco's WDRs. The NOV requires Halaco to provide a workplan, by February 28, 2000, to bring their site into compliance.

Page Museum

On October 14, 1999, the George C. Page Museum (Museum) discharged an unknown quantity of wastewater containing petroleum and asphalt to storm drains leading to Ballona Creek in violation of waste discharge requirements contained in Board Order No. 97-045. Regional Board staff concluded that the discharge originated from an unpermitted clarifier at the Museum. Additionally, the Museum failed to submit monitoring reports, as required by NPDES Permits CAG994001 and CA0059722 for the permitted clarifier. On January 12, 2000 the Executive Officer issued Complaint No. 99-113 for administrative civil liability, in the amount of \$22,150. As of February 14, 2000, staff assumes that the Museum will contest the Complaint at the Board's public meeting on March 2, 2000.

City of Los Angeles Sewer System – USEPA/RWQCB's Review

Regional Board staff are being assisted by the USEPA in a review of the City of Los Angeles' Wastewater Collection System. The review team, including Ken Greenberg of the USEPA Region IX, USEPA's consultant (SAIC), and Regional Board staff, spent the week of January 24th reviewing

the City of Los Angeles' spill records; sewer operation and maintenance records; procedures, including emergency response, and specifications; interviewing Bureau of Sanitation personnel; and inspecting the NEIS project site, sewage collection facilities and spill sites. A preliminary report, detailing its findings and recommendations, is scheduled to be available by June 2000.

UNDERGROUND TANKS

Charnock Sub-Basin MTBE Investigation Area

At present there are 26 active sites in the Charnock Sub-Basin. Of the 26 active sites, site assessment has been completed at 16 sites. Additional site assessment is either underway or planned to be performed in the near future on the ten remaining sites. Groundwater monitoring is being performed at all the sites. Quarterly groundwater monitoring reports are received, reviewed, and commented upon on within a short time.

A total of six sites have approved remediation workplans for the cleanup of the soil and groundwater. Two sites need to have pump-and-treat cleanup activities implemented for the groundwater and have it discharged to the storm drain under an NPDES permit. The NPDES permits were approved by the Regional Board during the July 8, 1999 Board meeting. Soil and groundwater remediation has begun at two of the sites, on-site soil remediation is underway at two sites, limited offsite remediation has been initiated at one site, and a pilot plan for dual phase extraction has been approved at an additional site.

Staff performs a project status update telephone conference with the interested parties and the USEPA. Staff also attends meetings and participates in telephone conferences to discuss the pilot project cleanup alternatives for the remediation of the groundwater.

On September 22, 1999, the Executive Officer and the USEPA issued separate enforcement orders to Shell Oil Company/Shell Oil Products Company/Equilon Enterprises LLC, collectively known as Shell, for water replacement costs. The Orders were issued to ensure the residents of the City of Santa Monica and Culver City continue to receive historic water supplies in the wake of MTBE groundwater pollution at the Charnock Wellfields.

The enforcement Orders require Shell to either provide replacement water of a suitable quality or to pay the City of Santa Monica and Southern California Water Company to purchase replacement water. The cost to purchase replacement water is estimated at \$3.5 million per year. Shell must commence payment or provide replacement water starting on January 7, 2000. Shell has started making payments in accordance with the Order.

Staff and the USEPA had issued unilateral Cleanup and Abatement Orders (CAO) to CONOCO on April 20, 1999. The CAO required CONOCO to perform site investigation in a tiered approach with on-site soil and groundwater investigation to be followed by off-site assessment and data interpretation of the subsurface lithology. Ninety-percent of Tier One work has been completed at the site under the direction of the Regional Board and the USEPA. Preliminary data indicates MTBE contamination of the soil.

Arcadia Wellfield MTBE Investigation

The shallow aquifer in the vicinity of the former Mobil Station 18-LDM has been treated with a pump and treat system since October 1997. The treatment system is capable of pumping 35 gallon per minutes (GPM) of extracted groundwater. Currently, approximately 5 to 6 GPM of groundwater are being pumped from 11 groundwater extraction wells. The MTBE concentration in the combined influent ranged from 73 mg/L to 310 mg/L.

As of December 15, 1999, the treatment system has pumped 7.1 million gallons of groundwater and removed an estimated amount of 53 pounds of TPH and 172 pounds of MTBE. The impacted soil in the vadose zone has been treated with a vapor extraction system (VES). Since May 1999, 9057 pounds of cumulative VOC mass has been removed.

A Production Aquifer Remediation System (PARS), using activated carbon filtering to clean up the production aquifer, has been designed and approved by this Regional Board. In a public hearing by the City of Los Angeles Planning Department on August 12, 1999, the variance application for the installation of PARS was approved. Mobil has selected a subcontractor, Olson Construction, to construct the PARS. Construction of PARS is underway and expected to be completed by April of 2000. PARS operation is scheduled to commence during mid-April 2000.

A Remedial Action Plan to clean up the MTBE contamination in the lower aquifer was approved on May 21, 1999. Mobil has selected a subcontractor, Komex, to build the Lower Aquifer Remediation System (LARS). Cleanup system startup is expected to be in early March 2000.

San Fernando Valley Groundwater Basin MTBE Investigation Update

On December 10, 1999, the Los Angeles River Watershed Unit of the Underground Storage Tank Section opened four areas within the San Fernando Valley Groundwater Basin for MTBE pollution investigations. The State Department of Health Services identified where MTBE had been detected in several Drinking Water Systems. Three of the wellfields are operated by the City of Los Angeles (North Hollywood, Tujunga, and Verdugo wellfields) and one wellfield is operated in the City of Burbank (Burbank Operable Unit).

Questionnaires were sent to 58 initial potential responsible parties. The parties were required to collect information on their sites, which are located within an approximate one-mile radius of each wellfield area. The questionnaires were due back to the Regional Board by January 21, 2000. One additional site was identified and a questionnaire was sent on January 13, 2000.

A total of 23 of the 58 parties submitted information. Four sites have requested and received extended due dates to submit the information. Seventeen parties who received our questionnaires but failed to respond have been sent enforcement letters. Questionnaires were resent to seven cases due to new addresses that were identified. Seven cases need to be verified through updated owner/operator information.

UST Section staff plan to make another round of field surveys to verify the owners and mailing addresses and to ensure that all potential gasoline sites have been identified. Based upon the information received, staff will pursue further investigation to identify the source(s) and, where appropriate, require hydrogeologic assessments and cleanup activities.

Underground Storage Tank (UST) Program Geographic Information System Update

In response to the Governor's Executive Order D-5-99, UST Section staff is continuing to integrate the use of GIS into the leaking UST case review process. UST case review has been prioritized based upon distance to nearby production wells and groundwater recharge areas (Vulnerable Areas). Currently, the focus has been on updating active sites that are within 1000 feet of a production well. This process will continue for sites that are progressively further from production wells and recharge areas.

UST Section staff met with representatives from the LIAs/LOP within our Region to update them on the status of the GIS activities in the UST Program. In the future, each local agency will be provided with maps of their municipality under their jurisdiction that will include UST sites and production wells.

Groundwater Management System Geographic Information System

On April 1, 2000, the current Leaking Underground Storage Tank Information System (LUSTIS) will be converted to a new system called Groundwater Management System Geographic Information System (also known as the GEIMS/GeoTracker). This system was developed by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories to provide the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and public entities with mandated groundwater vulnerability information relating to MTBE.

The data will be maintained in a database, updated, accessed, and displayed using a Geographic Information System (GIS) and analyzed with web-based tools. Some of the highlight functions that will be achieved by GEIMS/GeoTracker are as follows:

- ? Integrate and interface with different database systems.
- ? Integrate data from multiple agencies' databases and enable the user to retrieve such data.
- ? Allow easy retrieval of data for individual locations, such as public supply well or LUFT site, via "pointing & clicking" on GIS electronic map.
- ? Ability to incorporate electronic reporting of data from LUFT sites and drinking water wells.
- ? Archive historical LUFT data for high-risk sites where further investigation is warranted due to immediate or implied threat to drinking water wells.
- ? Provide statewide GIS-based current location information for USTs, petroleum pipelines, and drinking water wells.
- ? Provide statewide water quality information, as required by legislative mandates, as an informational layer connected to locations of drinking water wells.
- ? Provide statewide well-specific information and regional hydrogeologic information needed to estimate the likelihood that a LUFT site will contaminate a drinking water well.
- ? Be accessible to government agencies and capable of being easily updated with current data.
- ? Provide platform-independent access to users via the Internet (Mac and PC friendly).
- ? Be accessible to the public through the Internet without the user having to install GIS software.
- ? Provide sufficient information to perform vulnerability analysis, such as by displaying zones of vulnerability around drinking water wells.

The new system is expected to help individual caseworkers and management with better tools to prioritize cases and to conduct regulatory cleanup oversight. The GEIMS database will uniformly store data needed for a statewide GIS mapping system. The GeoTracker will allow users to analyze data relationships, create reports, and generate maps of environmental data from multiple data sources.

Completion of Corrective Action at Leaking Underground Fuel Storage Tank Sites

Board staff has reviewed corrective actions taken for soil and/or groundwater contamination problems from leaking USTs from January 1, 2000 through February 10, 2000. It was determined

that no further corrective actions are required for the following:

- ? Former Exxon Service Station No. 7-4944, Rowland Heights (I-06075)
- ? Former Exxon Service Station No. 7-9168, Whittier (I-05608)
- ? Thrifty Oil Company Service Station No. 18, Monterey Park (I-07402)

SURFACE WATER DIVISION

WATERSHED REGULATORY

Advisory Committee for the Construction of the Alameda Corridor

On January 31, 2000, a Special Board Meeting was held to consider a Tentative Time Schedule Order directing Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority to comply with requirements contained in Order No. 99-143 for construction operations along the mid-corridor trench. The Board adopted the Tentative TSO with the understanding that the effects of the construction will be studied and reviewed. The findings may lead the Board to alter the Order in the future. The Board designated an advisory committee, composed of stakeholders, to review and discuss the findings. The committee agreed to provide an update to the Board every two weeks.

Compliance Update

Annual Industrial Storm Water Reports for all Industrial Storm Water General facilities were due on July 1, 1999. Approximately 2567 annual reports for the 2800 Industrial Storm Water Facilities within the Region have been received and entered into the SWRCB database. A more detailed review of the annual reports to determine adequacy of the information submitted is currently underway.

A total of 446 Notices of Non-Compliance for Failure to Submit the Annual Reports were mailed out on October 26, 1999. A 2nd level enforcement letter was sent to the remaining 198 facilities that did not respond to the Level 1 letter. A response to the 2nd level enforcement letter was due by February 1, 2000. A total of 73 facilities did not submit the requested information and will be subject to enforcement action. An ACL was issued for \$8,325 to Chano's Auto Wrecking and Sales on February 15, 2000 for failure to submit three annual reports.

WATERSHED/COASTAL WATERS

Watershed Management Initiative Chapter

Each Regional Board has completed the process of producing a "chapter" on how that Board is implementing watershed management in their Region. The consolidated statewide chapter will become the basis for funding decisions including allocating money for monitoring, TMDL development, and grant monies disbursement. Each Region's Chapter is updated on an annual basis. The last update occurred in January 2000 and includes information on Regional Board implementation of the state's upgraded nonpoint source management program.

Copies of this Region's current Chapter, as well as Appendices, and/or its Executive Summary may

be obtained by contacting the Regional Programs Section secretary at the Regional Board office. The document may also be sent out electronically in MSWord97. The document is also available on the Regional Board's webpage under Regional Programs at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/~rwqcb4>.

Calleguas Creek Watershed

The *Water Quality/Water Resources Subcommittee* last met on August 6. Updates on TMDLs and strategies for reduction of nitrogen by POTWs were major topics of discussion. The Subcommittee is currently in the process of drafting a Water Resources/Water Quality Chapter in the Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan which has gone out for in-house agency review.

Subcommittee members have developed a list of their goals and objectives for water quality and water resources and are working to clarify participants' goals and objectives, identify possible solutions to problems, pinpoint concrete actions which will be taken to address the problems, filter out long-term from short-term goals, and reach agreement on what issues to deal with first. Agricultural best management practices (BMPs) and concerns over use of household water softeners and their contributions of chlorides to treatment plants are two early action items that have been identified.

The *Flood Protection/Sedimentation Subcommittee Technical Workgroup* is currently involved with discussions on conducting a hydrologic study of the watershed and the need for historic photographs to evaluate changes in sedimentation over time. The full subcommittee's next meeting is scheduled for March 13.

The *Public Education/Outreach Subcommittee* has completed the first edition of a newsletter to cover watershed issues and events. The Subcommittee will eventually have its own website with links to other web pages. Additionally, the group has produced a color brochure on the management plan process in the watershed.

A *Land Use Subcommittee* has recently been formed and will include representatives from local planning agencies.

The *Habitat/Recreation Subcommittee* met on February 1 and continues work on a wetlands study which includes a habitat mapping component. A *Biology Advisory Group* is being formed to aid this Subcommittee in review of technical materials.

The *Steering Committee for the Watershed Management Plan* last met on September 30 and is scheduled to meet again on March 30. A draft Table of Contents for the Calleguas Creek Watershed Management Plan has been prepared.

The full *Management Committee* last met on November 18 and its next meeting has been rescheduled to March 30. Information about the management committee and its subcommittees can be found at <http://www.calleguas.com/cc.htm>

Data generated by the *Surface Water Element of the Calleguas Creek Characterization Study Monitoring Program* is being evaluated. Monitoring associated with the Groundwater Element of the program is now being implemented. Another component of the program, funded by Clean Water Act 205(j) monies, is evaluating nonpoint source contributions and is in the data analysis stage.

Los Angeles River Watershed

The *Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council* meets on the third Wednesday of each month. The last meeting was held on January 19 and included meetings of the water resources, water quality, and multi-use projects committees. Shirley Birosik, Regional Board staff member, presented an overview of the San Gabriel River Watershed in the water quality committee meeting. The Internet address for the Council is <http://www.lasgriverswatershed.org>. The Friends of the LA

River now has a Los Angeles River e-mail discussion forum. To subscribe, send a request via e-mail to la-river-discuss-subscribe@makelist.com. Archives of past Los Angeles River discussions may be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.egroups.com/list/la-river-discuss>. On August 10, members of the Watershed Council assisted the California Coastal Conservancy in conducting a tour of potential restoration sites in the lower watershed as part of a meeting of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project. These sites may be viewed at <http://www.coastalconservancy.ca.gov/scwrp/index.html>.

Santa Monica Bay Watershed

The *Modeling and Monitoring Subcommittee of the Malibu Creek Watershed Advisory Council* has drafted a watershed-wide monitoring program for the Malibu Creek Watershed. The group last met on May 6. A draft monitoring program has been distributed to stakeholders for comment. A major task will be finding partners to participate in this voluntary program to assess and help correct the water quality concerns in this area.

The *Malibu Lagoon Task Force* last met on September 14. The Task Force is concerned with lagoon breaching, the septic tracer study, and all aspects of the UCLA study of the lagoon. The UCLA study covers a hydrologic evaluation, appropriateness of various biological and water quality objectives, water level management, eutrophication issues, pathogens, and the historical condition of the lagoon. The study was funded by a California Coastal Conservancy grant with assistance by local agencies. A new facilitator is now leading the group toward refining the future goals of the Task Force. The group last met on February 15.

The *Malibu Creek Watershed Advisory Council* last met on January 18 and included a report on subcommittee activities.

A watershed committee has been meeting in the Topanga Creek Watershed. A major near-term goal of this watershed committee is to prioritize potential actions previously identified in a draft Topanga Creek Watershed Management Study and start a coordinated resource management planning (CRMP) process. A longer-term goal is preparation of a watershed management plan that will help address a number of issues including flood control in the canyon. The last meeting of the watershed committee occurred on February 2 and included finalization of plans for the Streambank Stabilization Workshop scheduled for March 4. The committee's website address is <http://www.TopangaOnline.com/twc/>.

The *Technical Advisory Committee to the Topanga Creek Water Quality Study* (funded through 205(j) monies) was formed to help guide the project. The Committee last met on November 30 to review preliminary data.

Other Santa Monica Bay Watershed activities are covered under the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Project item.

Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project

The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project is a partnership of public agencies working cooperatively to acquire, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands and watersheds between Point Conception and the International border with Mexico. Using a non-regulatory approach and an ecosystem perspective, the Wetlands Project works to identify wetland acquisition and restoration priorities, prepare plans for these priority sites, pool funds to undertake these projects, implement priority plans, and oversee post-project maintenance and monitoring.

The goal of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project is to accelerate the pace, the extent, and the effectiveness of coastal wetland restoration in Southern California through developing and implementing a regional prioritization plan for the acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of Southern California's coastal wetlands and watersheds. Ultimately, the Wetlands Project's efforts

will result in a long-term increase in the quantity and quality of the region's wetlands.

The Wetlands Project is headed by Board of Governors comprised of top officials from each of the participating agencies. The Southern California Wetlands Managers Group and the Public Advisory Committee serve as advisory committees to the Board.

The Wetlands Managers Group is responsible for drafting the regional restoration plan and advising the Governing Board on regional acquisition, restoration, and enhancement priorities. The Wetlands Project has also established a panel of scientists to advise on regional goals, specific objectives, project criteria, and priorities.

Governing Board meetings are public and are noticed at least 10 days prior to each meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for May 19, 2000. You may receive email notification of all board meetings by signing up on the [Wetlands Project email list](#). Minutes from previous meetings and other information about the group may be found on their website at <http://www.coastalconservancy.ca.gov/scwrp/index.html>.

The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project currently is requesting information on acquisition, restoration, and enhancement projects for coastal wetlands and watersheds in Southern California. Project nominations received by March 17, 2000 will be considered for the fiscal year 2000/01 priority project list. Each spring, the Wetlands Recovery Project Managers Group recommends a list of priority projects to the Governing Board that meet the evaluation criteria adopted by the Board.

The evaluation criteria are available on the website. A key consideration is whether projects will actually be able to use funds for the groundwork in the upcoming fiscal year. Other potential projects are entered into a database for reconsideration in the future.

The Wetlands Recovery Project does not have adequate funds for all of the projects on the priority list, so it has adopted a policy of "first-ready, first-funded." The Managers Group will be reviewing potential projects during February and March 2000 for the 2000/01 fiscal year. The Governing Board will consider the updated priority list at its May meeting. To nominate a project for consideration, please provide the project information requested on the website by March 17, 2000.

A project is more than a wetland or watershed that needs help. It must be a specific action. To be considered a priority project, acquisitions must have willing sellers and restoration work must have a local agency or non-profit that can carry out the work with the assistance of the Coastal Conservancy. The Wetlands Recovery Project helps to identify and fund worthy projects and it does not carry out the work. Limited funds are available for planning. Projects closer to the coast or clearly benefiting coastal resources will receive preference. A list of the current priority projects is provided on the website as well.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

50th Anniversary of the Regional Board

An anniversary event was held at the DoubleTree in Pasadena on January 26, 2000 to celebrate 50 years of preserving and enhancing our Region's water resources. The event was well attended by more than 160 guests, including past and present board members, staff, elected officials, along with representatives from local agencies, the regulated community, environmental groups, and community members. The Regional Board received many resolutions and commendations from various cities and agencies, commending our agency for our efforts over the past half-century.

National Storm Water Coordinators' Meeting

Carlos Urrunaga and Xavier Swamikannu of the Surface Water Regulatory Section attended the 7th National Storm Water Coordinators' Meeting in San Diego on January 24-26, 2000. The meeting was organized by the USEPA for federal and state staff to discuss and resolve issues relating to storm water management. Discussions centered on the recent release of the "Phase II" storm water regulations. The Phase II regulations lower the regulatory threshold size for which construction site operators must obtain NPDES permit coverage for construction activity from five acres to one acre.

The new regulations also increase the number of municipalities that are required to obtain NPDES permits. This is not an issue in our Region because most municipalities are already regulated under a countywide municipal storm water permit adopted by our Regional Board. The new regulations do require that some state and federal facilities (within urbanized areas) be covered by a municipal NPDES storm water permit. State and federal facilities may include military bases or public universities which have multiple buildings for multiple purposes.

Input on Low-Flow Diversions at the Los Angeles City Council's Committee on the Environment

On February 14, 2000, Jon Bishop, Chief of the Regional Programs Section, attended a meeting of the Los Angeles City Council's Committee on the Environment to discuss low-flow diversions. Mr. Bishop offered comments at the hearing in support of the City's consideration of using low-flow diversion, which sends urban runoff during dry weather to sewage treatment plants instead of being discharged to the beach.

Baldwin Park Groundwater Monitoring Workshop

Regional Board staff held a workshop for dischargers who were recently issued Cleanup and Abatement Orders (CAOs) in the Baldwin Park Operable Unit. One requirement of the CAOs is the submittal of a groundwater sampling and analysis plan to the Regional Board. At the meeting, staff answered questions, provided guidance documents and QA/QC information regarding groundwater sampling and analysis, and agreed to help the dischargers compile and distribute groundwater data once it is submitted. The next meeting regarding monitoring is scheduled for October 30, 2000.

Neighborhood Meeting in the City of Torrance

The City of Torrance Fire Service recently determined that a power outage at a Ralph's store (in the Country Hills Shopping Center) in September 1999 was caused by acid that had corroded an underground electrical cable and conduit. Shallow groundwater exists at the site at a depth of about two feet. Currently, electricity to Ralph's store is being supplied through a temporary overhead cable. Earlier this month, the developer of the Country Hills Shopping Center (Watts) entered into a cost recovery agreement for Regional Board oversight of source identification, assessment, and cleanup.

On February 9, 2000, Augustine Anijiello represented the Regional Board at a neighborhood meeting called by the City of Torrance to provide information to concerned property owners regarding the soil and shallow groundwater contamination. As many as 200 residents attended the meeting. As reported by Augustine, the Regional Board is overseeing a subsurface investigation to identify the contaminant source(s), to assess the extent of the contamination, and to complete cleanup.

Valley Leadership Institute

At the request of the Valley Leadership Institute of the San Fernando Valley, Blythe Ponak-Bacharowski, Regional Board staff member, gave a presentation on the duties and programs of the Regional Board on January 20, 2000. The Valley Leadership Institute was interested in learning about the role of government agencies in preventing hazardous and toxic materials from

contaminating water resources and the environment, and how individuals could help in that endeavor.

International Visitor

On February 16th, Mr. Patricio Vallespin Lopez, Director of CONAMA, the Comision Nacional Del Medio Ambiente (the Chile National Environmental Protection Agency) visited the office to meet with the Executive Officer and to learn more about Cal/EPA and Regional Board authorities to protect water quality. Mr. Vallespin toured the office, met with several staff and was appreciative of the time spent at the Regional Board.

BKK Class I Landfill Postclosure Permit Workshop

At the request of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), Blythe Ponek-Bacharowski, Regional Board staff member, participated as a panel member at the BKK Class I Landfill Postclosure Permit workshop held in West Covina on January 24, 2000. The panel was composed of representatives from DTSC, South Coast Air Quality Management District, the California Integrated Waste Management Board, the USEPA, and the Local Enforcement Agency (City of West Covina). Panel members were available to answer questions related to the postclosure permit and any inquiries regarding regulation of both the Class I and Class III portions of the BKK Landfill.

Underground Storage Tank Working Group Meeting January 13, 2000

The eighth UST Working Group meeting was held at the Regional Board office on January 13, 2000. More than 37 people were in attendance. Attendees included environmental consultants, local regulatory agencies, an environmental lawyer, an environmental organization, a special interest group, Regional Board staff, and representatives from major oil companies. A great number of Regional Board UST Section staff also attended due to the interesting and informative nature of the topic.

Keith Kaufman of Environmental Biotechnology focused on natural bio-attenuation and provided the audience with basic concepts of the natural attenuation process. Steve Billingsley of American Purification presented his company's product of adsorption wastewater cleanup system. Dr. Weixing Tong, Regional Board UST staff member, presented the Domenico analytical model, the latest development of staff efforts to study MTBE plume length. The presentations were well received and resulted in many questions and discussions from the participants.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for late April 2000. The potential topics of interest identified by the Working Group members include one, an update of state MTBE investigation and cleanup guidelines and two, a discussion of testing procedures for other oxygenate compounds.

Presentation on TMDLs given at a Conference by the California Water Environment Association

On February 8, 2000, Jonathan Bishop, Chief, Regional Programs, gave a talk on TMDLs in the Los Angeles Region at the California Water Environment Association's Industrial and Hazardous Waste Conference. The presentation focused on the regulatory and legal basis for the TMDLs, the schedule of upcoming TMDLs, and the required elements of a TMDL. The conference attendees included local industries, environmental consulting firms, and government agencies.

ADMINISTRATIVE/TRAINING UPDATE

Inspection Training

Several Regional Board staff attended NPDES/Non-Chapter 15 Inspection Training held at the Santa Ana Regional Board during December 13-16, 1999. The training included the review of water regulatory programs, inspection procedures, proper documentation related to criminal investigations, QA/QC, and safety issues during field inspections.

The training also included field visits to several municipal wastewater treatment plants. During the visits, many operation and maintenance issues that could affect the quality of the treatment plant effluent were discussed.

NPDES Permit Writers' Training

All new employees and some experienced staff of the Surface Water Regulatory Section attended the one-week NPDES Permit Writers' Training Course held in Riverside during the last week of January. The course provided the basic regulatory framework and technical considerations that support the development of wastewater discharge permits. The course was designed for new permit writers but also served as a refresher for those who are experienced in the NPDES program. The course provided solid training in various areas of permitting, including development of technology based limits, water quality based limits, site specific objectives, and the concepts of reasonable potential, mixing zones, and dilution factors.

The course also introduced various tools and resources available to assist the participants in writing NPDES permits.

Personnel Report

As of February 15, 2000, our staff total was 124: 106 technical staff (including 2 part-time staff), 4 permanent administrative support staff, and 14 permanent clerical staff.

Staff is currently taking steps to fill 1 Career Executive Assignment position, 1 Unit Chief, 17 technical positions, 1 Associate Governmental Program Analyst, and 1 Associate Information Systems Analyst (Specialist).

Since January 4, the following appointments have been made:

Tony Rizk was appointed on 1/21/00 as an Associate Water Resource Control Engineer in the L.A. Inland Unit. Tony earned a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from North Carolina State University. He is a registered Mechanical Engineer in California, with over 15 years of experience in hydraulic and environmental engineering. Tony worked at the DOE-Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the Tennessee Valley Hydraulic Engineering Laboratory, and as a the Tennessee Valley Hydraulic Engineering Laboratory. Tony is the inventor of a patented water aeration system and a self-regulating water flow control valve.

Alex Puglisi was appointed on 2/1/00 as an Environmental Specialist III in the Nonpoint Source Unit. Alex works in the Industrial Stormwater Program where he focuses on enforcement issues and preparing ACLs for Board Meetings. Alex has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Biology and a Master of Public Administration in Environmental Resource Management from the University of New Mexico.

The following separated from Region 4:

Marian Woo, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, transferred to Department of Financial Institutions.